

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 DRC-01 /043 W

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R 191941Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7508

INFO USCINCSO

USAFSO

OSD/ISA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0799

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, CI

SUBJECT: VISITS OF FLAG RANK U.S. OFFICERS TO CHILE

1. I HAVE LEARNED THAT GENERAL GUSTAVO LEIGH, MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT JUNTA AND CHILEAN AIR FORCE CINC, WILL INVITE GEN. SALISBURY, COMUSAFSO, TO ATTEND CHILEAN AIR FORCE DAY MARCH 21. THIS REQUIRES US TO ADDRESS ENTIRE QUESTION OF VISITS OF U.S. OFFICERS OF FLAG RANK TO CHILE.

2. CINCSO WAS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO VISIT CHILE IN NOVEMBER 1973. LAST OCTOBER MY PREDECESSOR AND GENERAL ROSSON AGREED THAT SOME DELAY WOULD BE DESIRABLE IN LIGHT OF THEN EXISTING PRESS AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES IN THE U.S. TOWARDS THE CHILEAN JUNTA AND USG DIFFICULTIES IN BEING RESPONSIVE TO GOC REQUESTS FOR MILITARY AND INTERNAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE.

3. I BELIEVE THAT WAS A PRUDENT DECISION. HOWEVER, IT IS MY VIEW THAT WE SHOULD NOT FURTHER DELAY THE RESUMPTION OF NORMAL AND TRADITIONAL U.S. FLAG OFFICER VISITS TO CHILE. SUCH VISITS, ESPECIALLY UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE MILITARY JUNTA, ARE AN IMPORTANT ASSET WHICH WE SHOULD NOT FAIL TO EXPLOIT. IN ADDITION, BY THE TIME OF THE AIR FORCE CELEBRATION IN MARCH, THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE BEEN IN POWER MORE THAN SIX MONTHS AND NO U.S. FLAG OFFICER HAS

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VISITED HERE IN THAT TIME. ANY SIGNIFICANT FURTHER DELAY ON

OUR PART IS QUITE LIKELY TO BE MISINTERPRETED BY THE CHILEAN MILITARY/GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP.

4. I SHOULD WELCOME A VISIT BY GENERAL SALISBURY ON AIR FORCE DAY IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITS. THERE IS ONE POSSIBLE COMPLICATION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT GENERAL ROSSON HAS HAD PLANS FOR A TRIP IN APRIL, AND WE THINK THIS MAY BE LAYING ON TOO MUCH, TOO QUICKLY.

5. NWC AND ICAF VISITS NOW TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR LATE APRIL AND MID-MAY, RESPECTIVELY. AFTER AN APPROPRIATE INTERVAL I SHOULD HOPE WE COULD HAVE A VISIT BY CINCSO, FOLLOWED BY PROPERLY SPACED VISITS BY COMUSARSO AND COMUSNAVSO.

6. IN RECOMMENDING RESUMPTION OF THESE VISITS AND A SCHEDULE LIKE THE ABOVE, I BELIEVE IT IS DESIRABLE TO SCHEDULE THE VISITS TO CHILE IN CONJUNCTION WITH VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE HEMISPHERE, RATHER THAN AS TRIPS HERE ALONE. I WOULD ALSO REQUEST THAT ATTENDING STAFF AND FANFARE BE HELD TO A MINIMUM.

7. REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONCURRENCE FOR ME TO PROCEED ALONG THESE LINES IN DEVELOPING SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS WITH SOUTCOM.

8. IN PROPOSING THE ABOVE, IT IS NOT MY INTENTION TO OPEN THE FLOOD GATES TO ALL THOSE WHO WISH TO COME DOWN HERE FOR ORIENTATION TOURS. EACH VISIT APPROVED MUST CONTRIBUTE TO OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVES IN CHILE, AND I WOULD WANT TO REVIEW EACH PROPOSAL IN THE LIGHT OF THE THEN EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES.
POPPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JUNTA, MILITARY VISITS, PERSONNEL TRAVEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANTIA00799
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740224/aaaaawli.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <29 NOV 2002 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISITS OF FLAG RANK U.S. OFFICERS TO CHILE
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, CI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005